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FM USMISSION GENEVA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0264  
INFO RUEHJM/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 4664  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 0910  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6944  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0016  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 6567  
RUEHHS/AMEMBASSY BERN 8551  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 2072  
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV 1627  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0746  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 2024  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 1093  
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USTR FOR CKLEIN, AVENKATARAMAN, SFRANCESKI, MMOWREY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ETRD WTRO ECON PREL KWBG IS

SUBJECT: CONSULTATION ON PA ON BID FOR WTO OBSERVER STATUS

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1. (SBU) Mario Matus, Chair of the General Council, invited Charge to consult with him on the PA's bid for observer status in the WTO General Council (GC) as it relates to the December 17 meeting of the GC. The agenda for that meeting closes on December 4 and, given that the WTO's Ministerial Conference will fill everyone's time next week, he is trying to do the rounds discreetly this week. His consultations thus far evidence some shifts in approach but it is too soon to tell how this will play out.

¶2. (SBU) According the Matus, the EC is now taking the view that we should stick to the tradition of not placing issues such as this on the agenda until there is a consensus on the decision to be taken. Egypt still wants to place this issue on the agenda, as is the right of any WTO Member, but they had thought they would have the company of the EC and now they need to check again. Matus sensed that the PA was less inclined to push, though he wasn't certain. What intrigued him more is that he is hearing erstwhile supporters starting to raise questions such as who the PA represents (Gaza?) and what happens if the head of the PA steps down. He will speak with the Israeli's tomorrow but his read thus far is that they are still opposed.

¶3. (SBU) Charge advised Matus that we had agreed with the PA to meet with them and hold substantive exchanges on their request. He noted that he did not believe that these consultations would start before the agenda closes and that he didn't imagine it would involve just a single meeting in any event. He told Matus that it would be best if we could let that process unfold without the issue being forced at the December GC.

SHARK